

REMARKS

Claims 1-4, 6, 9 and 10 are presented for consideration, with Claim 1 being independent.

The specification and abstract have been reviewed and amended to correct minor informalities and improve their idiomatic English form.

Claim 1 has been amended to further distinguish Applicants' invention from the cited art, and Claims 5, 7 and 8 have been cancelled. Additionally, Applicants hereby affirm the election of Group I, Claims 1-10, and cancel withdrawn Claim 11.

Initially, the drawings were objected to for allegedly failing to show the "liquid containing section" having a "plurality of liquid introducing sections" as set forth in Claim 6. In response to this objection, the Examiner's attention is respectfully directed to Figure 3, showing a liquid transfer apparatus 310 having a plurality of liquid transfer apparatus 310, 320, 330, 340, 350 and 360. As shown, each liquid transfer apparatus includes a liquid introducing section. Accordingly, it is submitted that the drawings show the features of Claim 6, and thus reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection to the drawings is respectfully requested.

Claims 3, 6, 9 and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as allegedly being unclear. In response to this rejection, it is respectfully submitted that the claimed "processing means" in question is part of the liquid containing section 102 as discussed, for example, on page 11, line 12, *et. seq.*, of the specification, and the claimed "detection means" for detecting a specific component is discussed, for example, on page 19, line 26, *et. seq.* Such means for processing or detecting are not, *per se*, novel, and it is submitted that such features

would be well known to one skilled in the art. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that all the claims are in compliance with the particularity and distinctness requirements of the statute, and thus reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-3 and 5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Natelson '652. Claim 4 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as allegedly being obvious over Natelson in view of Bergh '265. Finally, Claims 6-10 were rejected as allegedly being obvious over Natelson in view of Hooper '467. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 of Applicants' invention relates to a liquid transfer apparatus having a plurality of units, with each unit comprising a liquid containing section for containing liquid, a liquid introducing section for introducing liquid into the liquid containing section, and a liquid leading out section for leading out the liquid introduced into the liquid containing section. The liquid introducing section of one unit and the liquid leading out section of another unit are connected, with the liquid leading section of each unit having energy application means for applying energy for ejecting the liquid.

The primary citation to Natelson relates to a system for analyzing fluid contained in capillaries. The capillaries 47 includes an inlet end and an outlet end. In contrast to Applicants' claimed invention, however, Natelson does not teach or suggest, among other features, providing energy application means in each capillary for applying energy for ejecting the liquid. Therefore, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) is respectfully requested.

The secondary citation to Bergh relates to parallel flow reaction systems and was cited for its teaching of a check valve.

The secondary citation to Hooper relates to a microchannel apparatus and was relied upon for its teaching of multiple inlets and mixing means.

These secondary citations fail, however, to compensate for the deficiencies in Natelson as discussed with respect to Applicants' independent Claim 1. Therefore, the proposed combinations of art, even if proper, still fail to teach or suggest Applicants' claimed invention. Therefore, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of the claims under 35 U.S.C. §103 is respectfully requested.

Accordingly, it is submitted that Applicants' invention as set forth in independent Claim 1 is patentable over the cited art. In addition, dependent Claims 2-4, 6, 9 and 10 set forth additional features of Applicants' invention. Independent consideration of the dependent claims is respectfully requested.

SECOND SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

In compliance with the duty of disclosure under 37 C.F.R. § 1.56 and in accordance with the practice under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.97 and 1.98, the Examiner's attention is directed to the following U.S. Applications:

<u>INVENTOR(S)</u>	<u>APPLICATION NO.</u>	<u>FILING DATE</u>
Takeo Yamazaki, et al.	10/480,040	December 9, 2003
Takeo Yamazaki, et al.	10/480,045	December 9, 2003
Takahiro Ezaki, et al.	11/285,069	November 23, 2005

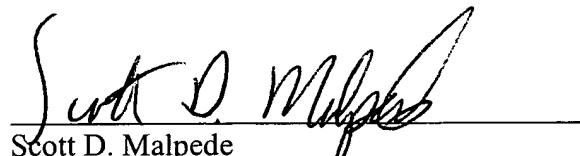
It is respectfully requested that the above information be considered by the Examiner.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and allowance of this application is deemed to be in order and such action is respectfully requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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